

# THE REMONSTRANCE.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, 1906.

The Remonstrance is published annually by the Massachusetts Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women. It expresses the views of women in Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, New York, Illinois, Iowa, Oregon, Washington, and other States who believe that the great majority of their sex do not want the ballot, and that to force it upon them would not only be an injustice to women, but would lessen their influence for good and imperil the community. The Remonstrants ask a thoughtful consideration of their views in the interest of fair discussion.

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## NO RESTRICTED SUFFRAGE.

THE question of woman suffrage is sometimes argued as if it were a matter of giving the ballot to certain select groups of women, — women who are taxpayers, or women of exceptional intelligence. This is misleading. If the ballot is given to women, it will be upon the same basis on which it is given to men. There will be a doubling of the electorate up and down the line. The ignorant, the heedless, the irresponsible, the purchasable classes of voters, will be multiplied by two. It is true that the suffragists sometimes present measures for a tax-paying or otherwise restricted ballot, but it is only as the entering wedge. So ardent an

advocate of woman suffrage as the Boston *Transcript* admitted the incongruity of such propositions with American institutions when it said, February 23, 1900:

"It is wholly inconsistent to argue that women who pay taxes have a right to vote not possessed by women who do not pay a tax, unless a like differentiation is made in the case of the men. It all comes to this — that the suffrage must be given to all women or none, or that only those men who pay taxes shall be permitted to vote."

## SUFFRAGE DEFEATS IN MASSACHUSETTS.

THREE woman suffrage measures were introduced into the Massachusetts legislature of 1905.

A petition from Mrs. Mary A. Livermore and others for an amendment to the constitution striking the word "male" from the qualifications of voters was adversely reported, 11 to 0, by the Committee on Constitutional Amendments, February 20. The next day, the House accepted the report without a word of debate, and later the Senate did the same.

March 1, the Committee on Election Laws reported unanimously against a petition for license suffrage for women. March 2, the House accepted the report without debate, and later, the Senate did the same.

March 10, the Committee on Election Laws reported, 7 to 4, against petitions to permit women to participate in caucuses for the nomination of school committee. An attempt was made in the House to substitute a bill, but it was defeated so decisively on a *viva voce* vote that a division was not asked. The Senate, March 20, voted 14 to 12 to substitute a bill, but the next day rejected the bill by a vote of 5 to 17.



### SUFFRAGE AND THE AVERAGE WOMAN.

IN considering the question of giving the ballot to women, it is the average woman — not the woman of exceptional wealth, or leisure, or capacity — who should be taken especially into account.

It is to be noticed, in the first place, that the average woman does not want the ballot. Any man, and especially any legislator, may verify this statement for himself by inquiries among the women of his acquaintance. If he has been led to believe that the demand for suffrage expresses the desire of most women, or even of a large majority of women, he will be speedily undeceived. He will find that the great majority of women either are indifferent to the ballot, or are unwilling that it should be thrust upon them. If women, as a rule, regarded voting as either a right or a privilege, how is the fact to be accounted for that, when partial suffrage has been given them, — as, for example, in school elections, — so few of them exercise it? In Connecticut not more than 1 per cent, and in Massachusetts not more than 4 per cent of the women qualified to vote do vote for school officers.

It may be said that the issues involved at these elections are not such as to draw out a large vote, and that if there were no more important issues submitted to men voters, not many men would take the trouble to go to the polls. But this answer is not conclusive, for if women really wanted the ballot, they would vote generally at school elections, if only to demonstrate their desire for a larger privilege. When the question of the expediency of a larger grant of the suffrage was submitted directly to the women of Massachusetts at the referendum of 1895, barely 4 per cent of them expressed a desire for it.

In the second place, the average woman is too busy to spare the time for an intelligent and steady exercise of the suffrage. To men, more perhaps than they are aware, the acquaintance with public affairs essential to a wise use of the ballot comes

incidentally, in the contact with other men in their daily occupations; but the occupations of the average woman are of a different sort and carry with them no such opportunities. Women already are well weighted with responsibilities. Although an increasing number of them are employed in business, the industries, and the professions, the normal life of American women is still, and is likely to be, in the home. Their work is to be the care of the home and of the children.

The demand for woman suffrage, therefore, resolves itself into this: that the average woman, who does not want the ballot, and who cannot spare the time for its intelligent use, shall have it thrust upon her because a small minority of women, with exceptional leisure or an exceptional craving for public life, desire it.

Thirty-two state legislatures were in session last year, and in most of them woman suffrage measures were introduced. That not a single legislature acted favorably upon such measures is to be attributed to the conviction on the part of legislators that the agitators for suffrage speak for only a small minority of their sex.

### NOT SO SIMPLE A MATTER.

At the first evening session of the National Woman Suffrage Association, at Portland, Ore., last June, Governor Chamberlain is reported as saying:

"It is a strange thing that the mother who is capable of caring for the welfare of the child in the home cannot do so in public. If she is fit to make laws for him in one place, she should be capable of doing so everywhere."

Is not Governor Chamberlain just a little too rapid in his logical processes? Does any such analogy as he assumes really exist between the quiet duties of the mother in her home and the struggles and tumult of politics?

Is the whole business of government, of making and enforcing laws, of administering public funds and public institutions, summed up in so simple a phrase as the "caring for children"?

Not every mother finds it an easy task to make laws for the child in her home, and to see to it that they

are obeyed. If, in addition, she is called upon to go to caucuses and conventions; to inform herself upon public questions and the records of public men sufficiently to vote with intelligence, and in such a way that her ballot will not do more harm than good to the community; to hold public office; to sit upon juries; and even, on occasion, to take a hand in the enforcing of laws, is she likely to perform her duties to the boy in her home better or worse? And if the average boy in the average home should suffer under these conditions, either in his character or his health, would society, in point of fact, have gained or lost by the transfer of the maternal empire from the home to the platform, the polling-booth, or the legislative halls?

These are questions which appear not to have occurred to Governor Chamberlain when he spoke at Portland.

### ONE DELUSION OF FEMALE SUFFRAGE.

"I HAVE sometimes wondered if the really good women who are inclined to approve this doctrine of female suffrage are not deluding themselves with purely sentimental views of the subject. Have they not in some way allowed the idea to gain a place in their minds that if the suffrage were accorded to women it would be the pure, the honest, the intelligent, and the patriotic of the sex who would avail themselves of it? If they are drifting on the smooth surface of such a pleasing conceit as this it behooves them to take soundings and locate landmarks. They can, perhaps, thus bring themselves to a realization of the fact that among women, as is, unfortunately, the case now among men, it would not be the best and most responsible that would most diligently use their voting powers, and that, even if every woman in the land should exercise the suffrage, the votes of the thoughtful and conscientious would almost certainly be largely outweighed by those of the disreputable, the ignorant, the thoughtless, the purchased, and the coerced. It is not to the purpose to say that even with all this the condition among women with the suffrage would be no worse than it now is among men. We need something better for the improvement of our suffrage, not an addition of the bad already existing." — *Grover Cleveland, ex-President of the United States, in the Ladies' Home Journal for October, 1905.*



## THE PRESS ON WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

### MR. CLEVELAND'S VIEWS.

(From *Harper's Weekly*, October 7, 1905.)

We suspect that, in what Mr. Cleveland says about woman suffrage, he speaks the mind of four fifths of the men in the country and of nine tenths of the women.

### WHAT THE BALLOT INVOLVES.

(From the Bristol [England] *Mercury*, May 13, 1905.)

THE possession of a vote does not necessarily limit the duties of the possessor to the mere record of the vote. It implies a number of responsibilities which the ladies, excepting those of the most strong-minded class, would hardly like to face. It should be understood that with the right to vote, there goes an acceptance of all that vote involves. Men do a great deal from a sense of chivalry that they would not do otherwise, and if the ladies are bent upon destroying what, in our benighted state, we cannot help calling the wholesome barriers, it is likely — human nature being merely what it is, and men being lower than the angels — that chivalry will have to take its chance.

### A WANING "CAUSE."

(From the Hartford [Conn.] *Courant*, March 14, 1905.)

THE woman suffrage interests have been travelling a somewhat shorter road this year than usual before the various legislatures where they have appeared. There has developed a fashion of outward courtesy, which involved prolonged hearings, and often the adoption by one branch of the proposed measure with the understanding that the other branch should administer the desired *coup de grace*. This season there has been more business and less fictitious courtesy. It has been out on the first round. Here in this state we introduced a while ago a modified form of female suffrage, allowing women to vote on school matters, but the law is practically a dead letter. Nobody seems ordinarily to pay any attention to it. The women who register are so few that the "right" has become a jest.

### THE WORST DEFEAT EVER RECORDED.

(From the Palmer [Mass.] *Journal*, February 24, 1905.)

WHEN the unanimously adverse report of the committee on constitutional amendments was taken up in the House yesterday, not a solitary member said a word on it, and it was not even passed for debate on the first call of the calendar. It seems as if the women must have been much discouraged by this unanimous report, which has never occurred before since the petition first came to the state house, as far

as memory serves, and they evidently thought that it was not worth while to spend their strength under such unpromising circumstances.

### THE INFLUENCE OF COLORADO.

(From the Butte [Mont.] *Miner*, February 18, 1905.)

IN its latest defeat in Montana the woman suffrage movement has much to blame Colorado for, in that the latter state has shown none of the benefits guaranteed as inevitable when the ballot was placed in the hands of the gentler sex.

Those duly appreciative of the benign influence of women, and the activity they display in all moral and reform movements, had reason to hope that their advent into politics might serve as a helpful leaven and place the current campaigns of the country on a higher plane.

Unfortunately, Colorado has dispelled the illusion, not that the women are responsible for existing conditions in that state, but that they have been powerless to prevent them.

### COMMON INTERESTS.

(From the Lincoln [Neb.] *State Journal*, February 25, 1905.)

AND so woman wants to vote merely because she must pay taxes on the property she owns for the benefit of the beneficent government that protects her in the enjoyment of her life and property. The general interests of husband and wife, of brother and sister, of the hired domestic and the policeman on his beat, are the same. Those laws which are the outgrowth of high ideals, those social regulations suggested by the higher civilization of which we boast, are for the advancement of the material and spiritual interests of male and female, rich and poor, high and low, throughout the land. The ultra suffragists nurse the delusion that the interests of man and woman are in some way divergent, and woman needs the ballot to protect herself from the best friend she has on earth.

### THE DIVISION AMONG WOMEN.

(From the Des Moines [Iowa] *Register*, January 7, 1905.)

ONE of the strongest arguments brought against the proposed constitutional amendment in the Iowa legislature was the division among the women themselves. Until the fight within the ranks is settled it can hardly be waged successfully outside.

### A VOICE FROM COLORADO.

ACCORDING to Louise Lee Hardin, editor of the *Business Woman's Magazine*, of Denver, the results of woman suffrage in Colorado have been disappointing to women themselves. Writing editorially in the number of her magazine for March, 1905, she remarks that each year

since the ballot was given to Colorado women has found fewer and fewer places allotted to them on party tickets, until 1905 saw a legislature without a woman in either house. The "old line parties" in the state have become so corrupt, she goes on to say, that the vote of the women only increases the names upon the poll book. "The good men of the state are helplessly reviewing the situation without a ray of hope for the future." Of the practical results to date she says:

"It was sincerely hoped by all that giving women suffrage would in some manner bring about a change for the better. But has it? I leave the world to judge from the evidence brought forth in the present contest for governor. Women have only followed where men led. It is true that they have caused the passage of some petty measures, but it was only a little 'sop' in order to keep them in line for something greater which men had promised a big corporation that they would put through."

This opinion, it should be remembered, is not that of an outsider or casual observer, but of a woman long resident in the state, who believes in woman suffrage and has exercised it, but is compelled to admit that political conditions have been in no way improved by it.

### HARDLY "EIGHT TO ONE."

COMMENTING on the vote of 172 to 21 in the British House of Commons last year on the proposition to make women eligible as municipal and county councillors and aldermen, *The Woman's Journal* said:

"Here we have the House of Commons voting eight to one to let them hold office; and among those who voted in favor were several prominent opponents of woman suffrage!"

This comparison leaves out of view the very important fact that only a small minority of the House of Commons took the question seriously enough to trouble themselves to vote either way upon it. There are 670 members of the House of Commons. What really happened was that only about one fourth of them voted in favor of the proposition.



## A SIGNIFICANT ADMISSION.

ELSEWHERE an extract is printed from *The Business Woman's Magazine*, of Denver, in which it is said that political conditions in Colorado have not been improved by woman suffrage, and that the only effect of giving the ballot to women has been to increase the names on the poll books.

Similar testimony comes from Utah. In a paper read before the Ladies' Literary Club of Salt Lake City, March 31, 1905, Mrs. William H. Dale, of that city, contrasted the high hopes entertained by Utah women when the ballot was first given to them with the meager results obtained by it. She said:

"The years have come and gone, election has succeeded election, and it can hardly be truthfully said that public affairs have been bettered. Just as many incompetent men are now elected to office as was the case before the franchise was granted to women. Ward heelers and disreputable politicians wield as much power at the primaries and polls as before, and the nomination of a woman to an elective office is now considered by all the party managers as an element of weakness rather than strength. Indifference has taken the place of former zeal, and it is no longer considered essential to recognize or cater to the women vote at any convention by any political party."

Admitting that the disappointing results are partly due to women themselves, Mrs. Dale concluded her paper with this summary of existing conditions:

"It is possibly too soon to say emphatically that equal suffrage, in this state at least, is a failure; but it can, I think, be truthfully said that in so far as a resultant benefit in the direction of the purification of political methods, the elevation of the standard of public service or servants, it has been a decided disappointment. Time may work a change in all this, but it would seem to be a demonstrated fact that the average woman knows but little about politics and cares less, that when she does vote, it is only at the urgent solicitation of the male members of the family, and that her ballot, when cast, is usually a duplicate of that of her husband, her father, or brother. Of course, there are some exceptions to this, but only enough to prove the rule."

## RECENT DEFEATS OF WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

## IN 1903.

In Arizona, a bill conferring full suffrage upon women was vetoed by the governor. In Kansas, West Virginia, Illinois, Minnesota, and Rhode Island, presidential suffrage bills were defeated. In Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Wisconsin, taxpaying suffrage bills were defeated. In Maine, a municipal suffrage bill was defeated. In Montana and Massachusetts, resolutions providing for the submission of suffrage amendments to the constitution were defeated. In New York, a bill to give taxpaying women in third-class cities the right to vote on propositions submitted at special tax elections failed. In New Hampshire, at the polls, March 10, a constitutional amendment giving women full suffrage was defeated, receiving only 14,162 votes, against 21,788, when to carry, it should have had two thirds of the total vote cast.

## IN 1904.

In Iowa, a proposed constitutional amendment failed to receive the required constitutional majority in the House, the vote being 43 to 40; and in the Senate was indefinitely postponed.

In Massachusetts, the committee on election laws reported, 10 to 1 "leave to withdraw" on a municipal suffrage bill and unanimously on a municipal and license suffrage bill. The adverse report on the latter bill was accepted without debate in both houses; that on the former was debated in the House, but was accepted without a roll call, the supporters of the bill being unable to secure the 30 votes needed to demand it.

In New York, bills to allow women to vote for school officers and to vote on questions of raising and spending money in third-class cities failed.

In Ohio, a bill to allow women to vote at local option elections failed.

In Rhode Island, the House, March 24, voted to indefinitely postpone a presidential suffrage bill.

In Vermont, a taxpaying municipal suffrage bill was defeated in the House.

## IN 1905.

In California, a proposed amendment to the constitution, giving women the right to vote for school trustees and boards of education and at school bond and school tax levy elections, failed to get the required two-thirds vote in the Senate and was rejected by the House by a vote of 38 to 39.

In Connecticut, a bill permitting women to vote at all municipal elections was defeated in the House, May 18, by a vote of only 29 to 111, the smallest affirmative vote for years, and in the Senate, May 31, only 2 votes were cast in the affirmative.

In Illinois, a bill permitting women to vote for members of the state board of equalization, board of assessors, sanitary district trustees, all municipal officers except police magistrates, upon all questions submitted to vote at municipal elections, and at all town meetings, was defeated.

In Indiana, a resolution to strike out the word "male" from the description of citizens entitled to vote was indefinitely postponed by the Senate, February 1, by a vote of 32 to 13.

In Kansas, a presidential suffrage bill was defeated in the Senate without discussion, 28 to 6. The bill had passed the House. Later, a bill was favorably reported to the Senate to take from women the right to vote at municipal elections, but it did not reach a vote.

In Maine, the petitioners for municipal suffrage for women were given "leave to withdraw."

In Massachusetts, the House, February 21, accepted without debate an adverse report upon a proposed suffrage amendment to the constitution. March 2, the House accepted without debate or division a report, "leave to withdraw," upon a license suffrage bill. The Senate, March 21, by a vote of 5 to 17, rejected a bill to allow women to participate in caucuses for school committee.

In Missouri, a proposed constitutional amendment was adversely reported February 21.

In Montana, the House, February 14, struck out the enacting clause of a bill submitting a suffrage amendment to the constitution, by a vote of 38 to 28.

In New Hampshire, a municipal suffrage bill was defeated.

In New York, the Senate Committee on Cities voted 1 to 11 against a bill to allow women taxpayers in cities of the third class to vote on questions of appropriations; and later, the Senate refused, by a vote of 11 to 26, to discuss the question.

In Rhode Island, the Senate, April 20, voted to refer a presidential suffrage bill to the next general assembly.

In West Virginia, at Wheeling, January 26, a proposition to allow women to vote at city elections was rejected at the polls by a vote of 2,500 against 4,172. In the legislature a resolution for a suffrage amendment was reported adversely.

In Wisconsin, a bill permitting women to vote at all town, village, and city elections (the bill being subject to a referendum to be taken in November, 1906) was defeated in the Assembly by a vote of 43 to 14.

## FAR AFIELD.

THE newspapers report that, last summer, Mrs. W. Thurmer Alryng, president, and the Hon. Lucy Firestone, vice-president, and three other members of the Central Counties Woman's Suffrage Association, sailed from England to investigate and report to their association on a system of government in which woman is the head of the family and the recognized ruler. This system, it appears, has long existed among the Nairs, one of the highest caste tribes of India, dwelling upon the Malabar coast. When a man of that tribe marries, he sinks his identity in that of the woman whom he weds, turns over to her his possessions, and asks only

for support, and the privilege of working for the maintenance of the family. Property descends not from father to son, but from mother to daughter, and the practical ignoring of the father and the recognition of the mother as the rightful ruler extends through the population.

The committee of British suffragists has gone out hopefully to study the workings of this system, with a view to urging its adoption in England. But old traditions die hard; and whatever Mrs. Alryng and her associates may report, there is small likelihood that modern civilization will go so far afield as to take the "matriarchate" of the Nairs as a model for the recasting of its institutions.